False billing of Credit Card holders in Karnataka

2262. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of FINANCE
be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that there have been a large number of complaints by the Credit Card holders of Karnataka regarding excess of false billing etc.; and

(b) whether there is any proposal to entrust Banking Ombudsman to address such complaints?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have reported that they have been receiving complaints regarding the credit card operations of banks even from Karnataka. On receipt of the same, these are taken up with respective banks for prompt redressal.

(b) It has been decided to include credit card complaints under the purview of Banking Ombudsman.

Cases pending with DRT

2263. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there were 33,622 cases pending with DRT involving Rs. 1,05,517 crores as on 31st December, 2002, due to some loop-holes in DRT Act and in the functioning of DRT;

(b) If not, the actual number of cases with DRT and the total amount involved in all those cases and the reasons for accumulation of arrears without being recovered;

(c) the measures and action taken by Government to plug loop-holes in the DRT Act and to Improve functioning of DRT; and

(d) the details of arrears of debts as on 31st December, 2002 recovered through DRT till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As on 31st December, 2002, 33,622 cases involving Rs. 1,05,517 crores were pending in the Debts Recovery Tribunals (DRTs). Litigation challenging

the validity of DRT Act was the principal reason for accumulation of arrears at that time. Eventually, the Act was held as a valid piece of legislation by the Supreme Court in March, 2002.

(c) The functioning of the DRT's was recently reviewed by the Government and with a view to improve the DRT system, some amendments in the Act and Rules are under process.

(d) As per available information, a sum of Rs. 16,903 crores have been recovered through DRTs till 31.3.2005.

Review of disinvestment of companies

2264. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government propose to review the disinvestment of a number of companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the number thereof; and

(c) the number of loss making companies closed during the last one year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) In keeping with the National Common Minimum Programme guidelines, in the case of 13 profitable Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) *viz,* Manganese Ore India Limited, Sponge Iron India Limited, Shipping Corporation of India Limited, National Aluminum Company Limited, National Building Construction Corporation Limited, National Fertilizers Limited, Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Limited, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited, Engineers India Limited, Balmer Lawrie and Company Limited, Engineering projects India Limited, Hindustan Paper Corporation Limited and State Trading Corporation of India Limited, It has been decided to formally call off the process of *disinvestment through Strategic Sale,* approved earlier.

(c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.